

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

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## EARLY NOTES ON IOWA OWLS

By EMERSON A. STONER

BENICIA, CALIFORNIA

The Screech Owl was one of my favorite birds when I was a resident of Iowa, which state I left in 1914 after having spent the first 22 years of my life there.

I often recall many of the experiences I had with birds while in Iowa. I lived on the edge of one of the important city parks,—Greenwood Park in Des Moines—and I found that opportunities for bird study were enhanced by the proximity of my home to this park where birds were abundant.

My brother-in-law, and later my mother, each in turn, held the office of postmaster (or postmistress) at the Greenwood Park Station. This post office sub-station was done away with, with the establishment of carrier service. The "Station" boasted, in addition to a post office, a soda fountain and small grocery store, and was during the summer months a scene of much activity, especially during the years that the Ingersoll Amusement Park, adjacent to Greenwood Park, was in existence. The station had been constructed with a rotunda and a large porch lighted by a great number of electric lights connected in series. It was one of my many jobs to turn on the lights at dusk and off again about midnight, and to replace the burnt-out globes. During these replacements I often checked up on the status of English Sparrow nests, as there were dozens of pairs nesting under the rafters of the extensive porch. There were frequently as many as seven eggs to a nest, although I doubted sometimes whether they were always laid by the same female.

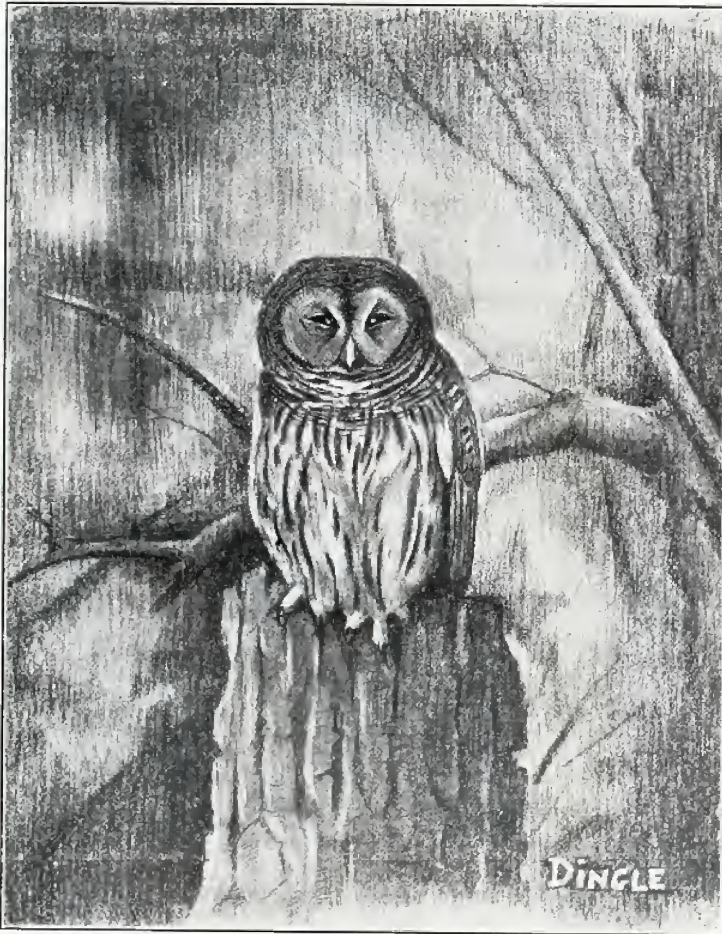
Screech Owls visited the sparrow colony almost nightly and were a natural check on the numbers of adult and young sparrows. I often found these little owls perched at an entrance to one of the sparrow quarters, not only during the nesting season of the sparrows but also throughout the winter, as sparrows used these quarters for roosting during winter as well as nesting during their season.

I find in my notebook an entry which was typical of the capture of a sparrow by the Screech Owls: "January 9, 1912—While I was going to turn the front lights on I saw two Screech Owls on the porch. One frightened a sparrow from its sleeping quarters and the other sprang up from the floor of the porch and caught the sparrow in midair. The second owl lit in some snow on the porch, rested there awhile with the sparrow in its claws, turning its head several times from the position of eyeing me to its right, in which direction it finally flew. I found blood marks in the snow where the bird had rested. Neither of the owls nor the victim uttered any sounds whatever during the maneuver."

I had Screech Owls of both the red and gray phases, which I kept alive in a wooden box with wire window screen on the side, as a cage. Sparrows were always acceptable as food for the little owls. These they tore apart and ate piecemeal. Their low trilling call was to be heard almost any evening, and I learned to call the birds by imitating the call and could get them to reply as they drew nearer and nearer to me, finally remaining on a perch 10 or 15 feet away. No sounds were made by them while captive in my box except, as my notebook says, "A short catlike blow through the nostrils with snapping of the mandibles when they were unduly disturbed."

I remember how, on moonlight nights, I used to line up a Screech Owl perched on a telephone wire or electric light wire, in such a way that it was entirely outlined against the moon. A boarder at the station got out his .22 rifle one evening and killed one by sighting it against the moon. This particular bird, so killed, I mounted and oddly it had not a mark of any kind on the body. It was a puzzle to me why it died instantly and dropped from the wire following the rifle shot.

Barred Owls were common in the woods between Greenwood Park and the Raccoon River. Some boys brought me a young Barred Owl on April 23, 1914, which I mounted and still have on my bookcase here in California. They had killed it with a slingshot as it stood at the entrance



BARRED OWL

"Barred Owls were common in the woods between Greenwood Park and the Raccoon River."  
(From a drawing by Edward von S. Dingle, reprinted from the 'Wilson Bulletin', March, 1926, p. 4.)





GREENWOOD PARK STATION, DES MOINES

Home of the author from 1905 to 1914, from which central point he studied birds as a boy.

to its nesting hole in a large oak. I mounted another Barred Owl, an adult, killed by a friend while he was squirrel hunting on December 26, 1912. It was being chased by crows. My notebook says the bird weighed 1 pound and 15½ ounces on the postoffice scales.

An entry in my notebook under date of June 9, 1913, records: "Today for the first time I heard a Great Horned Owl hoot. It flew as I approached it." In my experience they were more often seen than heard. I mounted one with wings spread, and this specimen brought me many congratulatory remarks from customers at the station; so much so that I felt I had indeed become a first-class taxidermist.

A boy brought me a Short-eared Owl, female, on February 2, 1914, which he had shot while it was perched on a fencepost about 6 p.m. It weighed 13½ ounces. I mounted this owl also.

The only Saw-whet Owl I had the fortune to see was on April 5, 1914. I had just investigated a Crow's nest, when nearby in the low branches of a small oak I found a very small owl which proved to be a Saw-whet. It had a half-eaten white-footed mouse in its claws, and was not at all wary. I reached out to grab it, but just succeeded in touching it as it flew a short distance. It lit in a higher part of the tree and, although I threw many sticks at it, I could not dislodge it, even though I struck the limb it was perched on, right under its feet.

Although owls are popularly known as night birds, I found them frequently quite active during the day, especially on cloudy days and an hour or so preceding nightfall. Their hoots and calls are always interesting, even fascinating. I believe that they are "holding their own" here in California, and trust they are also doing so in my native state.

#### GENERAL NOTES

**Orchard Orioles in Allamakee County.**—On May 26, 1946, we observed several Orchard Orioles at Harpers Ferry. Included were adult male and female birds and an immature male. They may have nested there as they were seen in the same locality about a month later.—LILLIAN SERBOUSEK, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

**Blue Grosbeaks and Other Birds.**—On May 27, 1946, I found a pair of Western Blue Grosbeaks on the farm of J. A. Sturtevant, in Plymouth County, Iowa. This is the same spot where I collected this species 12 years ago, and it is apparently a regular nesting area for this uncommon Iowa bird.

On June 9, 1946, I journeyed to Waubonsie State Park, Fremont County, as I had been intrigued by the report on southern birds in this area by M. L. Jones. I was pleased to find Kentucky Warblers, Summer Tanagers and several singing Cerulean Warblers, and my day was a complete success.—WM. YOUNGWORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

**Golden Plovers in Lee County.**—On April 28, 1946, I observed a flock of Golden Plovers feeding in a stubble field. I had stopped to look at a Meadowlark, when I saw a strange bird farther out in the field. I had glasses with me and I watched the birds, which I began to count. By a careful count there were at least 28 Golden Plovers in the flock. They were in a field about a mile west of highway 218 opposite the road to West Point in northern Lee County.—ROY OLLIVIER, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

**Carolina Wren and Orchard Oriole in Woodbury County.**—On July 17, 1946, a Carolina Wren was in our yard. I first heard it singing on this date. The bird stayed in the neighborhood until August 5 and was heard or seen almost daily. My last record for the Carolina Wren was in Monona County in 1930, but I find a published record for Sioux City, made by Dr. Stephens in 1919.

On July 21, 1946, I watched a male Orchard Oriole feed two fat young Cowbirds, which bulked twice as much as he did. He fed them several dozen times in the course of the time that I watched. The female oriole appeared on the scene only once and then merely to look on, and she made no attempt to feed the Cowbirds. No young orioles were in evidence and it was another case of misguided care.—WM. YOUNGWORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

**Ferruginous Rough-leg in Polk County.**—This species is listed by Dumont as an irregular and decidedly uncommon migrant in the western part of Iowa. It was recorded by Bailey in Linn County, and there are other records, but it is certainly rare in Iowa, especially in the eastern or central portions. On September 8, 1946, while accompanied by G. L. Ziemer, Director of the Iowa State Conservation Commission, I had the unexpected pleasure of watching a beautiful and exceptionally large Ferruginous Rough-leg for several minutes at distances as near as 100 yards, just north of Ankeny, in Polk County, Iowa. My only other Iowa record is for Woodbury County, on March 20, 1936.—BRUCE F. STILES, Des Moines, Iowa.

**Notes on a Goldfinch Nest.**—The last week in July, 1946, I had the good fortune to find a Goldfinch nest in an apple tree of our young orchard. It was fastened in an upright crotch about 4 feet from the ground. The outside of the nest was woven of very fine dry grass intertwined with bits of sheep wool. The inside was shaped like a cup and lined with thistledown. In a period of a week five pale bluish eggs were laid, and four of them hatched. The mother bird took all responsibility of hatching the eggs and feeding the young birds. I saw the father bird perched in the tree a time or two but he acted disinterested. The mother fed the young for two weeks, then suddenly they were gone. She remained a day or two longer, perching on the edge of the nest and the limbs of the tree, then she too flew away.—MRS. ROBERT PARSONS, Dickens, Iowa.



**Birds Seen on a Vacation Trip in the West.**—During the latter part of June and the month of July, 1946, Mrs. Steffen and I enjoyed a 5,000-mile trip which covered portions of Nebraska, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota, and included Rocky Mountain National Park, Bryce National Park, Grand Canyon National Park, Zion National Park, Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park, Great Salt Lake, Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, the Black Hills and the Bad Lands. We listed 100 birds on the entire trip which we considered western birds. For the most part, birds were not very plentiful in the southern portion of the area which we covered, but in the Bird Refuge we found a paradise. We were able to identify 35 different species, but of course there were many more which were too far away for positive identification. We saw large numbers of Stilt Sandpipers, Avocets, Pelicans, Western Grebes, White-faced Glossy Ibis and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. In lesser numbers we saw Treganza's Heron, Brewster's Egret, Cinnamon Teal, Long-billed Curlew, Wilson's Phalarope and Brewer's Blackbird.

Incidents of particular note are as follows: we saw a large number of Orchard Orioles along the highway west of Nebraska City; Townsend's Solitaire at Rocky Mountain National Park; American Pipits on the tundra along Trail Ridge Road at 12,000 feet altitude; two Golden Eagles in southern Utah, one of which flew down to pick up a dead rabbit from the highway not 60 feet ahead of the car; Green-tailed Towhees, Gray-headed Juncos and Grace's Warbler at Bryce National Park; a pair of Gambel's Quail along the road near Big Rock Candy Mountain; Red-naped and Natalie's Sapsuckers, White-throated Swift, Violet-Green Swallow and Audubon's Warbler at Grand Canyon National Park; Black-headed Grosbeak at Zion National Park; House Finches at Richfield and Salt Lake City; Pine Grosbeak at Beartooth Mountain; and beautiful Mountain Bluebirds everywhere. In the Black Hills we had a Western Tanager light on the ground almost at our feet. He hopped about not more than 10 feet from where we were standing. Through Wyoming and South Dakota we saw many Lark Buntings, and Western Meadowlarks were very plentiful.

We visited the little lake in Yellowstone National Park where we had seen Trumpeter Swans in 1941, but we saw no swans there this year. I have read since that the population of the Trumpeter Swan is estimated at nearly 1000.—EARNEST W. STEFFEN, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

**Interesting Observations near Cedar Rapids.**—Amana Lake afforded several interesting observations this past spring. On March 3, 1946, some members of the Cedar Rapids Bird Club and I saw 50 Blue Geese circle over the lake in V-formation. They did not stop but continued their journey north, flying over the Iowa River. On April 14, another but smaller flock flew over the lake and settled in a nearby field, where they fed upon the vegetation. There were 16 Snow Geese and 2 Blue Geese. Dr. Robert Vane took moving pictures of them. I observed a lone Blue Goose and Snow Goose on the lake shore on April 26.

On April 20, 1946, as we were standing on a mud flat at the eastern end of the lake watching a Black-bellied Plover, several Semipalmated Plovers busily feeding, and a pair of Ospreys fishing, a pair of American Pipits flew in just a short distance from us. We watched them for a long time as they walked or ran about, bobbing their tails, and searching for food. When they flew away we heard their flight notes. Six days later, at the same place, I saw a Piping Plover at close range. I had it in my field of vision with two Semipalmated Plovers, but previous to that it had been feeding at another part of the mud flat.

May 12 we saw and heard a pair of Henslow's Sparrows singing in a hay-field adjoining Amana Lake. Also in this field were Grasshopper, Savannah and Lincoln's Sparrows, as well as many Bobolinks. Our first record in five years of a Stilt Sandpiper was made on this day on a small roadside pond in Johnson County.

We were standing near a pond in Cedar Rapids on April 28, watching some of the more common shore birds, when a pair of Wilson's Phalaropes flew in. They immediately began to feed, paying no attention to us. A Long-billed Dowitcher stopped at this pond on May 5.

It is pleasing to note the increase in the number of nests of the Cliff Swallow on the cliffs on the west side of the Cedar River at Palisades State Park. In 1945 there were about a dozen nests, but this past summer we saw over 100 nests. Additional nests were made in holes in the cliffs. Although small numbers of Cliff Swallows have nested here for a number of years, the 1946 nesting is the largest to date.

We observed American Egrets at Upper Palisades on July 21, although their arrival was reported a few days earlier.—LILLIAN SERBOUSEK, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

**A Cardinal's Unusual Singing Perch.**—During the past summer (1946), while attending the first part of the Summer Session at Iowa State College, Ames, I noted with pleasure one particular Cardinal. Time after time he would select as his perch the very top of Friley Hall, and then sing for all he was worth. I had never before noticed a Cardinal selecting such an open place for singing.—JOHN BLIESE, Waterloo, Iowa.

**Observations on the American Egret in Allamakee County.**—These observations were made in the vicinity of New Albin, which is located in the extreme northeastern corner of Allamakee County and also of the state. The town is also almost on the Minnesota line, and is on the banks of the Mississippi River. Along the banks of the river are numerous wooded sloughs and islands, making this location an ideal summer resort for the Egret's post-nuptial vacation.

The first birds usually arrive about the middle of July, but the numbers are increased by later arrivals until the end of July or the first of August. During August and September there is hardly a slough large enough for small fish and frog life that does not have one or more birds. The number is in accordance with the size of the slough as the individual birds seem to like to fish alone. Apparently these birds migrate in small flocks and then separate, each to his favorite slough. On July 25 of this year I counted 42 Egrets in a dead tree along a slough between New Albin and Reno, Minnesota. In this flock were six Great Blue Herons. It was my judgment that this flock had just arrived from the south. When watching the Egrets, occasionally there will be seen a Little Blue Heron fishing near an Egret but this bird is rare compared with the numbers of Egrets seen. All Little Blue Herons seen were in juvenile plumage.

About the middle of September the sloughs which held so many Egrets are vacant, all the birds having left for their home in the south.

This year (1946) the number of Egrets seen was almost double that of the previous year. Whether this reflects an increased breeding in the south or whether more birds felt they would like to visit the upper Mississippi on their vacation, is more than I can decide.—CHAS. A. STEWART, New Albin, Iowa.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in the Sioux City Area.**—The writer notes that W. W. Bennett in his booklet on the 'Birds of Sioux City, Iowa' (1931) listed this species as rare, and cited records by Dr. T. C. Stephens and Mrs. H. M. Bailey. DuMont, in his 'Revised List of the Birds of Iowa' (1933) reviews a number of observations of the bird in Iowa. He states that it is a fairly common summer resident in the southern part of the state and along the Mississippi River, uncommon in the central portion, and rarely found in the Upper Missouri River valley.

On May 2, 1943, Mrs. Doris Anfinson-Cory and I took a field trip afoot to the Stone Park area. The day was clear, the light was good, there was a high wind, and temperature was 52° at start and 69° at return. The trees were only partly leafed out. We observed a pair of gnatcatchers in a timbered area about a quarter-mile from the park, between the road and the Big Sioux River. We watched them for more than 30 minutes and field marks were carefully checked, including the white eye-ring and long tail with white feathers on each side. They often cocked their tails like wrens. The privilege of hearing their song, which Roger Tory Peterson describes as "a thin, squeaky warbling series of notes", was thrilling. Later in the afternoon we met W. W. Trusell and Eugene Cutler near the west entrance of the park. Mr. Cutler said he had observed the gnatcatcher in the park in a past season. Ruth Sampson reports that she, with Edna Brower and Ann Penning, observed a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in Stone Park on May 29, 1945; it was under observation for 15 minutes in good light.—ZELL C. LEE, Sioux City, Iowa.

**A Sight Record of the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Wright County.**—On May 18, 1946, I followed a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher for a quarter of a mile along highway 69 south of Belmond, and watched it for more than half an hour. Ed Samore, of Garner, was with me, and we agreed on the following description: the outstanding characteristic was the deeply forked tail, much greater than a Barn Swallow's, more like a tern. The tail appeared almost black, yet in certain lights seemed to have outer feathers of white. The distance from rump to the end of the tail was apparently equal to the distance from beak to rump. Total length appeared to me to be more than that of a Robin. The head was quite flat, with a dark eye. The beak was straight, dark, and not very large. The feet and legs could not be seen, although the bird alternately faced us and away from us and, when not chasing insects, rested on the top wire of the fence or on the posts, never on the ground. The forehead, crown, nape and back were gray, with a bluish cast in the sun. The chin and breast were white, with no spots or stripes. The belly seemed to shade into yellow. The wings were brown, tapering to a point, and seemed to have a golden hue beneath, when in flight, much as a Flicker has. Wing-spread seemed about tip-to-tail length.

The bird behaved like a flycatcher. It did not rest on the ground. It did not go higher than 20 feet from the ground while we watched it. It made short flights for insects (evidently), and returned to the wire or nearby post. In the half hour we watched, it progressed south about a quarter of a mile. I couldn't see any of the salmon pink a Scissor-tail is supposed to have, but we were east of the bird and it was mid-afternoon, so there was a slight disadvantage. We heard no sounds from it. At the nearest point we were about 35 feet away. The country was rolling, plowed fields, soft underfoot because of rains, and very few trees. The Scissor-tail was different from any other bird I have seen through the years, more beautiful than many of them, and extremely graceful in flight.—MRS. HELEN M. BROWN, Fort Dodge, Iowa.



**Fall Notes from Emmet County.**—Egrets were numerous in the late summer of 1946. During August and part of September ten birds remained on a pond adjoining High Lake; 15 were reported as seen at one time in late September. In September several Ospreys were reported as staying at High Lake. A female Red-breasted Nuthatch was seen on September 23. It was hopping about on the ground near our back steps, and was observed for some time at a distance of only a few feet before it flew away. This is one of the few records of this bird in our vicinity, and the earliest. An early fall appearance of Prairie Chickens for recent years was reported by Fred Wolden. On October 20 he saw nine birds along highway 17, between Estherville and Wallingford.—B. O. WOLDEN, Estherville, Iowa.

**Notes on the Fall Migration in Western Iowa.**—With regard to weather and prevailing winds, September of 1946 was the finest September we had had in years. From September 2 until the 22nd we had mostly bright clear days with southerly winds. Often during early afternoon the winds were so strong the swallows were grounded. These winds were apparently conducive to migration for during the period I saw daily between 1000 and 5000 birds of the following species: Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Purple Martin, Cliff Swallow, Barn Swallow, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow and Rough-winged Swallow. Above numbers included all these species combined. September 22 was cold with a strong north wind and I didn't see any swallows again until the 25th, then a short burst of about 100 birds a day of all species for the next three days. After that there were a few scattered birds, but the big flight was over. My latest dates for some of these birds which surpass all other years are as follows: Purple Martin, Oct. 5, 1946; Cliff Swallow, Oct. 1, 1946; Rough-winged Swallow, Sept. 25, 1946.

We had a little rain on September 7, and flocks of Ruby-crowned Kinglets were everywhere; this was my earliest date by a week. I have had Juncos as early as September 24, but they had not yet appeared on October 2. I obtained some late vireo records in 1946: Red-eyed, a singing male on Sept. 18; Warbling, Sept. 20; Blue-headed, Sept. 8; Bell's Sept. 16. I had Yellow Warbler on Sept. 20, 23, 26; last Arkansas Kingbird, Sept. 11; Crested Flycatcher, Sept. 8; Baltimore Oriole, Sept. 26; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Sept. 25; Olive-backed Thrush, Sept. 19; Tree Swallow, Oct. 9; Bank Swallow, Oct. 4 and 8; Chimney Swift, Oct. 5 (ties my record of Oct. 5, 1932). For two weeks (Sept. 28-Oct. 21) the heaviest flight of Orange-crowned Warblers, Myrtle Warblers and Ruby-crowned Kinglets since 1929 (according to my records) was in progress.

The migration of Blue Jays and Flickers was heavy during September and early October. The jays migrate in flocks of from 5 to 50, and the Flickers more or less singly or in long, scattered lines. Hawk migration was the poorest I have ever seen, and carries the discouraging suggestion that hawks are being killed rapidly. I saw one Duck Hawk, one Golden Eagle, and other hawks in numbers of a dozen or two a day. I saw 5 American Rough-legs and 2 Red-tails on October 28; one of the latter was coal black, the darkest I have ever seen. They were apparently moving south together, and when flushed from one tree flew farther away and lit in another. On October 28 I saw my first Lapland Longspurs of the fall, a flock of about 2000. I also saw a lone Vesper Sparrow, my latest record for that species. There was a large flight of Golden-crowned Kinglets at that time; they were everywhere about the neighborhood.—WM. YOUNG WORTH, Sioux City, Iowa.

**A Sight Record of the Purple Sandpiper in Iowa.**—On May 12, 1946, I took the spring bird census for the Iowa Ornithologists' Union and covered the vicinity of New Albin, Allamakee County, in the extreme northeast corner of the state. I was working along the north mouth of the Upper Iowa River, an area of overflow land that is free from timber. About one-half mile from where the north fork opens into the Mississippi there is a low, rocky waterfall, surrounded by a sand flat. Wading in the shallow water as it flowed over the rocks was a lone sandpiper. No other sandpipers were near by. The bird's slate-colored back and breast with white underparts made me think of the Purple Sandpiper at once, and also the fact that it was feeding among the rocks below the small waterfall. I was able to approach within 50 feet of the bird, and with the glasses the short orange legs were apparent. No other observers were with me, but in my own mind I am satisfied that the identification was correct.—CHAS. A. STEWART, New Albin, Iowa.

#### LOCAL BIRD CLUBS IN IOWA

**SIoux CITY.**—We review briefly the schedule of activities of the Sioux City Bird Club for the past year, beginning in September, 1945. On September 11 the first meeting of the new year was held. It was in the form of a 6:30 picnic supper at Stone Park Lodge; the various members discussed their "Summer Bird Experiences and Observations". On October 11 a special meeting was called at the Art Center and the William L. Finley films were shown. The first number of the Audubon Screen Tours was presented on October 16, with Howard C. Cleaves showing "Midnight Movies in Animal Land" at the Central High School auditorium. R. D. Hissong gave an illustrated lecture, "General Survey of Insects and Their Relation to Man", using his own slides, at the Art Center on November 16. On December 12, Mrs. Laurel Reynolds appeared on the Screen Tours program in "Fun with Birds", and showed what fascinating experiences we might have in our own immediate neighborhoods if we learned how to attract birds.

A big event of the year was our Christmas party, at the Girl Scout "Little House", 7:30 p.m. on December 18. There was a gay Christmas tree decorated with colored lights, a crackling fire in the fireplace, and the finest kind of pot-luck supper. After supper the tables were pushed back and the merry-making began. A well-rounded evening of entertainment included playing games and singing songs with piano accompaniment. On December 23 we took the annual Christmas census and 13 persons participated. The compilation meeting which followed was held at the Wellhausen home.

Dr. Olin S. Pettingill presented his "Bird Magic in Mexico" lecture and films as a feature of our Screen Tours schedule on January 9. On January 21 nearly 100 members and friends of the Sioux City Bird Club attended the "Beaver Dinner" at the Jackson Hotel. Although nice, thick beefsteaks were served to the less venturesome, the majority ate beaver, most of us for the first time, and pronounced it very good. William Williges, who is doing research on beavers at the University of Wyoming, told of his field investigations on the beaver in that state. W. W. Trusell, state conservation officer, explained the status of the beaver in our locality. Bruce Stiles, a former president of our club and now Chief of Fish and Game of the Iowa State Conservation Commission, sketched the history of wildlife conservation in Iowa. The "Beaver Dinner" program was a very interesting one and the event was a decided success from all angles. Our annual dinner was held on April 1, with a varied and interesting program by our

members. A joint meeting of the Bird Club and the Sioux City Academy of Science was held on April 19, with about 105 members of the respective organizations in attendance. A dinner was served, after which William Ferguson, creator of several syndicated newspaper features, showed colored movies taken around his home at Estes Park. This was also a highly successful meeting, the arrangements for which were made by Zell C. Lee and Dr. T. C. Stephens. C. A. Harwell gave the final number of the Screen Tours for the spring season, on May 3, showing colored movies and giving whistled imitations of the songs of birds.

Many scheduled field trips of the Sioux City Bird Club were taken during the year with good attendance and satisfactory lists of birds observed. Localities visited included Winnebago Indian Reservation (October 21), McCook Lake, Mud Lake and Loblolly region (November and April), Nestor L. Stiles Aurelia Meadow Wildlife Preserve (May 19), and many birding grounds in the Sioux City region.

Current officers of the Club are: Zell C. Lee, president; Dr. John L. Schott, vice-president; R. D. Hissong, treasurer; Ruth Sampson, secretary; Mrs. Adaline T. Lambert, editor of 'The Dickcissel'.—Above report condensed from notes in several issues of 'The Dickcissel'.

#### RECENT BIRD BOOKS

AUDUBON BIRD GUIDE: EASTERN LAND BIRDS, by Richard H. Pough (Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N. Y., 1946; cloth, 12mo, pp. i-xxxvii plus 1-312, with 48 col. pls. & 2 maps; price, \$3).

With a return to normal conditions in the printing industry more new bird books will be making their appearance. The present book takes its place as an important bird identification guide, and as such is certain to be a real competitor of the long-popular Peterson guides. It is the same size as the Peterson guide, but covers only the land birds of eastern North America. This is approximately half the birds, so another book will be needed to treat as many birds as Peterson does in one volume. The necessity of carrying two books in the field instead of one may prove a disadvantage.

The Audubon Bird Guide is an excellent book. A 'Foreword' of 20 pages presents a great deal of information in boiled-down form and covers such topics as variations in appearance, voice and song, psychology and behavior, binoculars, regional and local bird distribution, habitat requirements and territorial needs, seasonal movements, economic relations, bird clubs, etc. The description of species, forming the body of the book, seems to be adequate and follows the usual pattern in pocket guides, giving concise information on identification, habits, voice, nest and range.

The most important feature is the illustrative equipment—48 pages in color in the center of the book. The paintings are by a new artist, Don Eckelberry, whose work already places him among our top bird artists. The colored figures are exceedingly accurate and well done, and arranged to show diagnostic field marks to the best advantage. This is enhanced by very clear printing. In every species where the sexes differ, both male and female are shown, and in many cases juvenile or seasonal plumages are also shown. There are over 400 colored illustrations of 275 species. Bird students will welcome colored pictures of such obscure species as Bell's Vireo, seldom shown in bird books. In spite of the small size of page, the birds are remarkably large, the warblers and some of the others being as large as the figures in 'Birds of Minnesota' and 'Birds of Massachusetts'.

The reviewer has long been of the opinion that "Eastern", "Western"



and other directional prefixes to bird names to designate subspecies have small place in field ornithology. Mr. Pough has dispensed with them almost entirely and makes no attempt to define the many subspecies or give their ranges in his book. If this is indicative of the modern trend, subspecies may be passing out of the picture. His revision of several vernacular names gives us Boreal Owl (Richardson's), Common Sapsucker (Yellow-bellied), Western Kingbird (Arkansas), Water Pipit (American), Common Grackle (Bronzed or Purple), Brown-headed Cowbird (common variety). It will take a little while to get used to them.—F. J. P.

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WILDLIFE RESOURCES OF IOWA, by Bruce F. Stiles, Everett B. Speaker, Reeve M. Bailey and George O. Hendrickson (State of Iowa, Des Moines, 1946; wrappers, 8vo, pp. 1-41, with 31 photographs).

This nicely illustrated booklet is interesting reading and gives a great many facts on the status of wildlife in Iowa at the present time. It is thoroughly optimistic and tells us that, due to the sound conservation principles and propagation methods employed, our wildlife has greatly increased, with the promise of a satisfactory surplus for the hunter and fisherman to harvest for many years to come. The chapter on 'Birds and Mammals', by Mr. Stiles and Dr. Hendrickson, should be especially interesting to our members. The list of Iowa birds is given as 371. Of this number 29 are winter residents, 148 are spring and fall migrants, 47 are permanent residents, and 36 are casual or accidental visitors. The list of birds which have bred within Iowa during the past 25 years is set at 150. There is a good discussion of the different groups of birds, with special emphasis on the upland game birds, waterfowl and marsh birds. It is fine publicity for the wildlife restoration program, and as a free booklet it should have a wide circulation.—F. J. P.

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In the recent passing of Ernest Thompson Seton many of us recall the familiar figure who often visited Iowa on lecture tours. The Editor recalls one of these lecture dates on April 1, 1942, at Nashua, Iowa, which was the last time that he met Seton. Seton possessed a rare combination of talents—artist, author, lecturer and eminent naturalist. His was a many-sided nature, and doubtless many incidents of his long and colorful life will never be known.

The Editor takes the liberty to quote from the letter of a correspondent who formerly lived in Iowa. The letter was written in 1942 and contains a revealing sidelight on Seton.

"When we were in Ottumwa, and I was spending much time evenings and Saturdays at the public library, a very interesting thing occurred with reference to Seton. A little Jewish boy who patronized the children's department, would take out one of Seton's books and renew it and renew it and renew it, sometimes having it for weeks before returning it. Then he would take another and do the same. Finally the librarian asked him why it took him so long to read them. He said it didn't, but that they were so poor he felt he could never afford to own copies for himself, so he was copying them word for word in cheap composition books he got at the book store, so he could read them whenever he liked. May Ditch, the head librarian, thought that would interest Seton, so she wrote him and told him of it. He immediately wrote back and said if she could get the boy to give up all the copies he had made and she send them to him, he would send the boy

a complete set of everything he had published. When the boy brought the composition books in it was revealed that he had even tried to copy the marginal drawings with which Seton's books are embellished. I have often wondered what became of that boy and his interest in wildlife."

James Hodges, 1034 Harbor Road, Davenport, Iowa, is making a study of the fluctuation in numbers and slight migratory movements of a number of permanent residents, such as Red-bellied, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch and Starling. He would like to have data on these birds from members in various parts of the state, and will appreciate any information received.

#### THE CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

will be taken as usual between December 20 and 30. Study the form of censuses published in previous March issues and follow details carefully. List birds in the A. O. U. order, giving exact number seen, and include data on hours, weather and ground conditions. Our spring and Christmas census reports have been criticised because in group lists the name of the observer of an unusual bird is seldom given, and it is impossible to tell who saw what bird. Since this practice very seriously impairs the scientific value of the list, we urge contributors to give the name of the person or persons who observed the unusual species. Send your list to the Editor of 'Iowa Bird Life' not later than January 15.

### MEMBERSHIP ROLL OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION\*

#### CHARTER MEMBERS (1923)

Bailey, Mrs. Mary L., Sioux City	Palas, Arthur J., Postville
Banning, R. H., Cresco	Pierce, Fred J., Winthrop
Battell, Mrs. F. L., Ames	Spiker, Chas. J., Branchport, N. Y.
Bennett, Walter W., Los Angeles, Calif.	Stephens, Dr. T. C., Sioux City
Kinnaird, Mrs. W. A., West Des Moines	Wendelburg, Mrs. Toni R., Des Moines
Mills, Wier R., Pierson	Wolden, B. O., Estherville

#### MEMBERS

Adams, I. C., Jr., Columbia, Mo., 1941	Beale, Mrs. R. L., Tama, 1946
Allert, Oscar P., McGregor, 1929	Becker, Miss Hilda, Davenport, '26
Anderson, Dr. Rudolph M., Ottawa, Canada, 1942	Beckwith, Miss Alma, Atlantic, '39
Austin, Carl E., Winnipeg, Canada, 1945	Berkowitz, Albert C., Des Moines, 1943
Austin, Mrs. E. J., Charles City, 1942	Berry, Mrs. J. E., Mediapolis, '46
Austin, Dr. O. L., Tuckahoe, N. Y., 1931	Bibbee, Prof. P. C., Athens, W. Va., 1945
Ayres, Charles C., Jr., Ottumwa, 1941	Bice, Mrs. Don C., Atlantic, 1942
Badger, R. J. H., Montezuma, 1946	Birkeland, Henry, Roland, 1933
Bailey, John H., Davenport, 1945	Bishop, Dr. Louis B., Pasadena, Calif., 1934
Barlow, Mrs. John, Waterloo, '42	Bixler, Mrs. Ingram, Cedar Rapids, 1944
Bartlett, Wesley H., Algona, 1935	Bliese, John, Waterloo, 1935
Bates, Curtis E., Rome, N. Y., '46	Blomstrand, Harry K., Leon, 1946
Baumgartner, Miss Josephine, Des Moines, 1942	

- Blythe, Miss Emma, Williamsburg, '46  
 Bordner, Mrs. Frances, Iowa City, 1929  
 Boyd, Mr. and Mrs. Ivan L., Baldwin, Kans., 1937  
 Bresser, Mrs. Henry, Burlington, 1946  
 Brooks, Dr. Frank G., Mt. Vernon, 1945  
 Brown, Mrs. Helen M., Fort Dodge, 1946  
 Brunner, Miss Marjorie, Cedar Rapids, 1946  
 Burns, Mrs. C. E., Ottumwa, 1946  
 Carmichael, Miss Thelma, Tama, 1946  
 Chadbourne, Dr. T. L., Vinton, '38  
 Clark, Mrs. Ella L., Burlington, '25  
 Confare, Miss Miriam, Cedar Rapids, 1942  
 Connor, Mrs. Stephen, Sigourney, 1946  
 Copp, Miss C. Esther, Wheatland, 1933  
 Crabb, Wilfred D., Kingsley, '37  
 Crouter, Miss Frances, Cedar Falls, 1944  
 Currier, Ed. S., Portland, Ore., '34  
 Cuthbert, Nicholas L., Chicago, Ill., 1946  
 Daft, Miss Ruth E., Griswold, '46  
 Dales, Mrs. Marie, Sioux City, '29  
 Darnell, Wm. J., Council Bluffs, 1945  
 DeLong, Mrs. W. C., Clarion, '39  
 Devereaux, Eugene, Mt. Vernon, 1945  
 Dickey, Miss Margaret, Cedar Rapids, 1946  
 Dix, Mrs. Ray S., Cedar Falls, '35  
 Dole, J. Wilbur, Fairfield, 1929  
 Dorweiler, Miss Margaret, Cedar Falls, 1945  
 Downing, Glenn R., Iowa City, '38  
 Dragoo, Lavina, Cedar Rapids, '29  
 Dubuque Bird Club, Dubuque, '33  
 Dulany, Geo. W., Jr., La Jolla, Calif., 1943  
 DuMont, Mrs. Janet, Des Moines, 1927  
 DuMont, Philip A., Chicago, Ill., 1924  
 Eastman, Mrs. E. P., Burlington, 1929  
 Edgar, Mrs. G. P., Burlington, '39  
 Edge, Mrs. C. N., New York, N. Y., 1931  
 Eighme, Miss Marietta, Ottumwa, 1943  
 Ennis, Mrs. Edna M., Tama, 1944  
 Ennis, Dr. J. H., Mt. Vernon, '41  
 Errington, Dr. Paul L., Ames, '32  
 Ewing, H. E., Washington, D. C., 1943  
 Farquhar, Catherine, Atlantic, '46  
 Faulkner, Geo. O., Waterloo, 1931  
 Fay, Mrs. Barbara Brice, Tama, '46  
 Fitzsimmons, C. S., Sibley, 1945  
 Flodin, Mrs. C. C., Cedar Rapids, 1931  
 Frankel, Mrs. Henry, Des Moines, 1925  
 Funk, Miss Ruth F., Independence, 1940  
 Garberson, Miss Marguerite, Sibley, 1946  
 Gessell, Mrs. E. C., Des Moines, '43  
 Giernot, Bruno B., Iowa City, '46  
 Gingerich, Mrs. A. C., Wellman, '46  
 Glotfelty, Miss Ila, Fairfield, '45  
 Goodman, John D., Fairfield, '41  
 Goodman, Wilfred, Ames, 1946  
 Graesing, Howard, Spirit Lake, '39  
 Grant, Dr. Martin L., Cedar Falls, 1937  
 Griffin, Mrs. Carl, Winthrop, '46  
 Gross, Dr. Alfred O., Brunswick, Maine, 1942  
 Grove, Geo. A., Preston, 1946  
 Grummann, Mrs. Herbert R., St. Louis, Mo., 1943  
 Guthrie, Richard A., Woodward, '39  
 Hallowell, Miss Loraine, Waterloo, 1932  
 Harford, Dr. Henry M., Kansas City, Mo., 1945  
 Hathorn, Glen M., Cedar Rapids, 1934  
 Hawk, Grover C., Hedrick, 1945  
 Hayek, Mrs. Dorothy, Cedar Rapids, 1946  
 Hayette, Miss Verona, Cedar Rapids, 1943  
 Hedges, Harold C., Kansas City, Kans., 1946  
 Heffelfinger, Mrs. J. G., Ottumwa, 1946  
 Hemsley, Ethan A., Dubuque, '36  
 Hendrickson, Dr. and Mrs. Geo. O., Ames, 1931 and 1944  
 Herrmann, Henry, Dubuque, '45  
 Heuer, Ralph, Davenport, 1940  
 Heuser, E. P., Dubuque, 1940  
 Hicks, Dr. Lawrence E., Columbus, Ohio, 1938  
 Hillman, Mrs. Jay, Rockford, '44  
 Hodges, Jim, Davenport, 1944  
 Holst, Emmett, DeWitt, 1946 (J. M.)  
 Hoskinson, Mrs. Helen H., Clarinda, 1940  
 Howard, Miss Alta, Des Moines, 1946  
 Hoyman, Miss Isabelle, Cedar Rapids, 1942  
 Huff, Mrs. Lloyd, Burlington, '46  
 Jacobsen, Mrs. John, Lake View, '46  
 Jahn, Mrs. Theodore L., Iowa City, 1943  
 Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph W., Des Moines, 1939 and 1927  
 Jones, Mrs. E. C., Wellman, '46



- Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Myrle L., Boone, 1931 and 1941  
 Keck, Dr. Warren N., Cedar Rapids, 1936  
 Kelley, Harry E., Cedar Rapids, 1946  
 Kendall, Miss Kathryn L., Marion, 1946  
 Kent, Mrs. Wm., Cedar Rapids, '32  
 Keyes, Dr. Charles R., Mt. Vernon, 1944  
 King, Mrs. Helen G., Grundy Center, 1933  
 Knoop, Miss Pearl, Marble Rock, 1937  
 Krieg, Mrs. Leopold, Burlington, 1946  
 Krieger, Miss Geneva, Mason City, 1946  
 Kubichek, Wesley F., Evanston, Ill., 1941  
 Kurth, E. A., Grinnell, 1946  
 Laffoon, Jean L., Ames, 1940  
 Lahr, Mrs. H. W., Storm Lake, '43  
 Lambert, Mrs. Adaline T., Sioux City, 1940  
 Laude, Dr. P. P., Iowa City, 1942  
 Lawson, Miss Faye, Fairfield, '45  
 Lee, Miss Zell C., Sioux City, 1943  
 Leigh, Miss Grace D., Independence, 1945  
 Lloyd, Monte, Sioux City, 1942  
 Loban, Miss Myra E., Waterloo, '38  
 Loban, Miss R. Lucile, Waterloo, 1938  
 Lotz, E. P., Burlington, 1946  
 Luckstead, David, DeWitt, 1946 (J.M.)  
 Luther, Mrs. J. S., Winthrop, 1946  
 Lynch, Mrs. C. J., Cedar Rapids, 1946  
 MacMartin, Mrs. W. G., Tama, '32  
 Maier, Miss Grace, Elkport, '46  
 Mallette, Robt. D., Atlantic, '42  
 Martin, Chas. F., Maquoketa, 1943  
 McCabe, Miss Olivia, Des Moines, 1932  
 McCartney, Mrs. R. C., Charles City, 1942  
 McCutcheon, Jas. W., Mt. Vernon, 1946  
 McDonald, Malcolm, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1935  
 McGuire, Uncas M., Creston, '46  
 Melcher, Rev. M. C., Epworth, '39  
 Meltvedt, Burton W., Paullina, '31  
 Menold, Miss Wilma, Strawberry Point, 1946  
 Messenger, Lawrence, Sioux Falls, S. Dak., 1946  
 Meyer, Dr. Alfred W., Cedar Rapids, 1942  
 Michael, Maude, Waterloo, 1942  
 Miller, Mrs. L. C., Wellman, '46  
 Millikin, Mrs. Forrest G., Creston, 1944  
 Morrissey, Thos. J., Davenport, '40  
 Morton, Miss Thelma, Cedar Rapids, 1943  
 Moser, Dr. R. Allyn, Omaha, Nebr., 1941  
 Mote, Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Marshalltown, 1929  
 Murley, Miss Margaret, Normal, Ill., 1937  
 Musgrove, Mr. and Mrs. Jack W., Des Moines, 1938 and 1943  
 Musgrove, Miss Jean, Des Moines, 1944 (J.M.)  
 Musselmann, Dr. T. E., Quincy, Ill., 1944  
 Myers, Mrs. Len, Waterloo, 1939  
 Nichols, Harvey L., Waterloo, '29  
 Oberholser, Dr. Harry C., Cleveland, Ohio, 1932  
 Ollivier, Roy, Mt. Pleasant, 1943  
 Only, Frank, Los Gatos, Calif., '44  
 Orr, Ellison, Waukon, 1935  
 Osher, Mrs. J. B., Estherville, 1939  
 Parsons, Mrs. Robt. O., Dickens, 1942  
 Peahl, Arlen, DeWitt, 1946 (J.M.)  
 Peasley, Dr. and Mrs. Harold R., Des Moines, 1943 and 1934  
 Peel, Clarence O., Boone, 1941  
 Petranek, Mr. and Mrs. E. J., Cedar Rapids, 1931  
 Pettingill, Dr. O. S., Northfield, Minn., 1937  
 Pickering, Mrs. Lawrence J., Red Oak, 1946  
 Pierce, Mrs. Harry H., Deep River, 1946  
 Pierce, Robt. A., Atlanta, Ga., '41  
 Pike, Walter E., Coggon, '46  
 Pollard, Warren, Montezuma, '46  
 Prestegard, Miss Tillie, Cedar Rapids, 1945  
 Preston, Roger, Grinnell, '45  
 Purdy, Miss Ruth, Cedar Rapids, 1943  
 Rector, Harry E., Vinton, '42  
 Reynolds, Miss E. Estella, Des Moines, 1943  
 Roberts, Dr. and Mrs. F. L. R., Spirit Lake, 1924 and 1926  
 Rosene, Walter, Jr., Gadsden, Ala., 1942  
 Ross, Hollis T., Lewisburg, Pa., '40  
 Ruegnitz, Mr. and Mrs. R. S., Dubuque, 1943 and 1942  
 Rugg, Mrs. Russell, Cedar Falls, 1946  
 Ruhr, Eugene, Atlantic, '41  
 Sage, Evan, Waterloo, 1942  
 Savage, David L., Salem, 1944  
 Schramm, Frank H., Burlington, 1934  
 Schuster, Miss Ival M., Dubuque, 1941  
 Scott, Dr. Thos. G., Ames, '37

- Serbousek, Miss Lillian, Cedar Rapids, 1931  
 Sherwood, Jack W., Salinas, Calif., 1936  
 Shields, Mrs. David H., Mitchellville, 1946  
 Shuttleworth, Mrs. W. D., Sibley, 1945  
 Slauson, Miss Virginia, Cedar Rapids, 1945  
 Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Dwight T., Des Moines, 1943 and 1944  
 Smith, Miss Irene M., Des Moines, 1943  
 Smith, Mrs. Wm. Merwin, Milford, 1945  
 Steffen, Miss Emily, Cedar Rapids, 1942  
 Steffen, E. W., Cedar Rapids, '42  
 Stewart, Dr. Chas. A., New Albin, 1944  
 Stewart, Paul A., Leetonia, Ohio, '43  
 Stiles, Bruce F., Des Moines, 1937  
 Stoner, Emerson A., Benicia, Calif., 1946  
 Stoner, Mrs. Lillian C., Albany, N. Y., 1945  
 Strickland, J. W., Jr., Mt. Vernon, 1945  
 Struck, Dr. K. H., Davenport, '29  
 Sutton, Dr. Geo. M., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1941  
 Tabor, Mrs. Edward F., Independence, 1945  
 Tabor, Robert B., Independence, 1944  
 Taylor, Mrs. H. J., Berkeley, Calif., 1939  
 Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. O. S., Rock Rapids, 1929  
 Thornburg, Mrs. Ross J., Tucson, Ariz., 1937  
 Tillapaugh, Miss Iola, Cedar Rapids, 1942  
 Tobin, John, Vinton, 1938  
 Tonkin, George, Chicago, Ill., 1938  
 Tramp, Mrs. H. L., Oskaloosa, 1945  
 Turnbull, Mrs. H. W., Diagonal, 1944  
 Turner, Mrs. Stella, Clarinda, '42  
 Vane, Dr. and Mrs. Robt F., Cedar Rapids, 1940 and 1946  
 Walker, Pearle C., Ottumwa, 1943  
 Ward, Mrs. J. J., Wellman, '46  
 Warters, Miss Mary Ellen, Des Moines, 1946  
 Weaver, Miss Gertrude S., Sioux City, 1946  
 Weber, Alois John, Keokuk, 1929  
 Weber, R. A., Keokuk, 1943  
 Williams, Chester W., Mt. Vernon, 1946  
 Willis, Miss Myra G., Cedar Rapids, 1940  
 Wilson, David, Mt. Vernon, 1945 (J.M.)  
 Wilson, Ernest, Ottumwa, '46  
 Wilson, Mrs. N. B., Mediapolis, 1945  
 Winegarden, Mrs. R. C., Wellman, 1946  
 Wistey, Mrs. Lloyd, South English, 1942  
 Witt, Miss Elizabeth, Elkader, 1943  
 Wolden, Mrs. B. O., Estherville, '39  
 Wood, Miss Mary E., Ottumwa, '45  
 Wright, Mrs. Earl C., Mt. Vernon, 1944  
 Young, Miss Mary H., Waterloo, 1940  
 Youngworth, Wm. G., Sioux City, 1926

## LIBRARIES

- Carnegie-Stout Public Library, Dubuque, 1931  
 Cornell College Library, Mt. Vernon, 1945  
 Iowa State Traveling Library, Des Moines, 1940  
 Kendall Young Library, Webster City, 1931  
 Library, Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, 1939  
 Library, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., 1931  
 McGill University Library, Montreal, Que., 1932  
 Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Mass., 1945  
 Public Library, Cedar Rapids, '31  
 Public Library, Council Bluffs, '31  
 Public Library, Des Moines, 1931  
 Public Library, Fort Dodge, 1936  
 Public Library, Marshalltown, 1946  
 Public Library, Sibley, 1945  
 Public Library, Sioux City, 1931  
 Public Library, Waverly, 1945  
 State College of Washington Library, Pullman, Wash., 1945  
 University of Illinois Library, Urbana, Ill., 1942

\*Complete to November 1, 1946. Year of joining the Union follows the name of each member. All cities are within Iowa unless otherwise noted. Junior Members are initialed 'J. M.' Corrections in the list will be appreciated.  
 Iowa total, 242.  
 Outside of Iowa, 47.  
 Grand total, 289.